

Cohort 2011 Five-Year Graduation Rates – State Results

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) calculates and reports graduation rates as part of overall efforts to improve educational outcomes for all students.

The 2011 five-year cohort graduation rate is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{\# of students in cohort (denominator) who graduate in 5 years or less}}{[\text{\# of 1st time entering 9th graders in 2007-08}] - \text{transfers out/deaths} + \text{transfers in}}$$

The 2011 five-year cohort graduation rate for Massachusetts public high schools was 86.3 percent which represented a increase of 2.9 percentage points from the four-year rate for the 2011 cohort and is the highest five-year graduation rate since 2007. The 2011 five-year rate increased by 1.6 percentage points when compared to the 2010 cohort five-year rate of 84.7. This increase as compared to the 2010 cohort five-year rate is the largest since the ESE began to calculate five-year graduation rates in 2007.¹

All student subgroups had higher 2011 five-year rates as compared to the 2011 four-year rates, including students with limited English proficiency and Hispanic students, who achieved the largest gains of 8.0 and 6.0 percentage points respectively. While significant gaps in the graduation rates among different subgroups remain, the additional year narrowed the margin between the highest and lowest racial and ethnic subgroups (White and Hispanic) from 27.2 percentage points at the end of four years to 23.2 percentage points after five years.

Additional critical findings of the report include:

- Hispanic males graduated at a rate that was 6.8 percentage points higher than their four-year rate and represented the largest increase of the major race/gender combinations.
- Students with limited English proficiency increased their five-year rate by 8.0 percentage points as compared to their four-year rate.
- Students receiving special education services had a five-year rate that was 5.2 percentage points higher than their four-year rate.

The following tables further summarize the five-year results for the 2011 cohort. The results are based on data submitted by school districts through the Department's Student Information Management System.

¹ The decrease in the five-year graduation rate for the 2009 cohort is partially attributable to a change in the Competency Determination standards for all 2010 graduates. The new standard included reaching the proficiency threshold of the English Language Arts and Mathematics sections and the Needs Improvement threshold of the Science section of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System. Additional information on the new standards can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr30.html?section=03>.

Table 1. Graduation Results for All Students and Student Subgroups²

		Graduates		Non-Graduates³				
	2011 Cohort # ⁴	5-Year Rate	2011 4-Yr Difference	Still in School	Non-Grad Completer ⁵	GED	Dropped Out	Expelled
All Students	74,307	86.3%	+2.9	2.1%	1.7%	2.3%	7.5%	0.1%
Female	36,325	88.7%	+2.2	1.5%	1.5%	2.0%	6.2%	0.0%
Male	37,982	84.1%	+3.6	2.6%	1.8%	2.5%	8.8%	0.1%
LEP ⁶	4,371	64.2%	+8.0	5.0%	9.0%	1.0%	20.4%	0.3%
Special Education	14,514	70.8%	+5.2	8.3%	4.2%	2.5%	14.1%	0.1%
Low Income	29,406	75.0%	+5.2	3.4%	3.3%	3.7%	14.3%	0.2%
High Needs ⁷	37,148	76.5%	+5.0	4.1%	3.1%	3.3%	12.8%	0.1%
African American	6,768	76.4%	+5.7	4.3%	3.6%	2.2%	13.2%	0.2%
Asian	3,565	90.4%	+2.7	1.6%	1.8%	1.0%	5.2%	0.0%
Hispanic	10,364	67.9%	+6.0	4.3%	4.8%	3.7%	19.1%	0.2%
Multi-race, Non-Hisp.	1,227	85.2%	+4.0	2.6%	1.5%	2.8%	7.7%	0.2%
Native American	194	79.9%	+3.7	3.2%	1.5%	4.6%	9.8%	1.0%
Pacific Islander	82	84.1%	+3.6	3.7%	2.4%	2.4%	7.3%	0.0%
White	52,107	91.1%	+2.0	1.4%	0.8%	2.0%	4.6%	0.0%
Urban	25,220	73.9%	+5.0	4.1%	3.5%	3.5%	14.8%	0.2%

² Due to rounding, row percentages may not equal 100 percent.

³ In the reporting of aggregate results, students are included in the first column (from left to right) for which they qualify. For example, students who dropped out or were expelled, but earned a GED, are included in the GED category. Students are only reported in one category.

⁴ The cohort count is as of the end of 2010-11 school year. The status (e.g. graduate, enrolled) is updated as of October 1, 2012.

⁵ Non-Grad Completer includes 1) students who earned a certificate of attainment, 2) students who met local graduation requirements but the district does not offer certificates of attainment, and 3) students with special needs who reached the maximum age (22) but did not graduate.

⁶ The limited English proficient, special education, and low income subgroups include all students that were reported in those categories at least once in high school. Students can be counted in more than one group.

⁷ High Needs subgroup includes students categorized as any of the following as of October 1, 2011: 1) Low Income, 2) Limited English Proficient, 3) Students with Disabilities, as well as students categorized as Limited English Proficient during the prior two school years (2010-11 and/or 2009-10).

Table 2. Graduation Results for Race/Ethnicity Groups by Gender

	2011 Cohort #	Graduates		Non-Graduates				
		5-Year Rate	2011 4-Yr Difference	Still in School	Non-Grad Completer	GED	Dropped Out	Expelled
African American Female	3,308	81.5%	+4.6	2.7%	2.9%	2.1%	10.6%	0.1%
African American Male	3,460	71.5%	+6.7	5.7%	4.2%	2.4%	15.8%	0.3%
Asian Female	1,738	91.1%	+1.8	1.7%	1.8%	0.8%	4.5%	0.0%
Asian Male	1,827	89.7%	+3.5	1.5%	1.8%	1.2%	5.7%	0.0%
Hispanic Female	5,092	72.0%	+5.1	3.2%	4.8%	3.3%	16.5%	0.1%
Hispanic Male	5,272	63.9%	+6.8	4.9%	4.8%	4.1%	21.7%	0.4%
Multi-race Female	625	87.8%	+3.0	2.7%	1.4%	2.9%	5.1%	0.0%
Multi-race Male	602	82.4%	+5.0	2.5%	1.5%	2.7%	10.5%	0.5%
Native American Female	112	84.8%	+2.8	2.6%	0.9%	6.3%	5.4%	0.0%
Native American Male	82	73.2%	+4.9	3.7%	2.4%	2.4%	15.9%	2.4%
Pacific Islander Female	40	87.5%	+2.5	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	0.0%
Pacific Islander Male	42	81.0%	+4.8	4.7%	4.8%	4.8%	4.84%	0.0%
White Female	25,410	92.8%	+1.3	1.0%	0.7%	1.8%	3.7%	0.0%
White Male	26,697	89.4%	+2.5	1.8%	0.9%	2.3%	5.5%	0.1%

Table 3. Graduation Results for Students Receiving Special Education Services by Gender

		Graduates		Non-Graduates				
	2011 Cohort #	5-Year Rate	2011 4-Yr Difference	Still in School	Non-Grad Completer	GED	Dropped Out	Expelled
Special Ed. Female	5,414	73.3%	+4.7	7.2%	4.2%	2.5%	12.7%	0.1%
Special Ed. Male	9,100	69.3%	+5.6	9.0%	4.1%	2.5%	15.0%	0.1%

Table 4. Graduation Results for Low-Income Students by Gender

		Graduates		Non-Graduates				
	2011 Cohort #	5-Year Rate	2011 4-Yr Difference	Still in School	Non-Grad Completer	GED	Dropped Out	Expelled
Low-Income Female	14,431	78.7%	+4.3	2.6%	3.1%	3.5%	12.0%	0.1%
Low-Income Male	14,975	71.5%	+6.2	3.9%	3.6%	4.0%	16.6%	0.3%

Table 5. Graduation Results for Limited English Proficient Students

		Graduates		Non-Graduates				
	2011 Cohort #	5-Year Rate	2011 4-Yr Difference	Still in School	Non-Grad Completer	GED	Dropped Out	Expelled
LEP Female	2,024	68.3%	+7.9	4.8%	8.4%	0.8%	17.5%	0.0%
LEP Male	2,347	60.7%	+8.2	5.1%	9.5%	1.1%	22.9%	0.5%
LEP in Original Cohort	2,463	63.9%	+4.5	5.3%	7.2%	1.2%	21.9%	0.3%
LEP Entered Cohort after 10/1/07	1,908	64.8%	+12.8	4.6%	11.7%	0.6%	18.1%	0.2%

Table 6. Graduation Results for High Needs Students

		Graduates		Non-Graduates				
	2011 Cohort #	5-Year Rate	2011 4-Yr Difference	Still in School	Non-Grad Completer	GED	Dropped Out	Expelled
High Needs Female	17,263	79.6%	+4.1	3.1%	2.9%	3.2%	11.0%	0.1%
High Needs Male	19,885	73.8%	+5.7	5.0%	3.3%	3.4%	14.3%	0.2%

Table 7. Graduation Results for Race/Ethnicity by Limited English Proficient Status

		Graduates		Non-Graduates				
	2011 Cohort #	5-Year Rate	2011 4-Yr Difference	Still in School	Non-Grad Completer	GED	Dropped Out	Expelled
African American LEP	986	73.1%	+10.8	5.2%	8.4%	0.6%	12.5%	0.2%
African American Non-LEP	5,782	76.9%	+4.8	4.4%	2.7%	2.5%	13.3%	0.2%
Asian LEP	732	80.3%	+7.3	3.1%	5.5%	0.7%	10.4%	0.0%
Asian Non-LEP	2,833	93.0%	+1.4	1.2%	0.8%	1.1%	3.8%	0.0%
Hispanic LEP	2,164	52.8%	+7.3	6.4%	11.2%	1.2%	28.0%	0.4%
Hispanic Non-LEP	8,200	71.8%	+5.5	3.7%	3.1%	4.4%	16.8%	0.2%
Multi-race LEP	36	61.1%	+5.5	5.6%	11.1%	0.0%	22.2%	0.0%
Multi-race Non-LEP	1,191	85.9%	+3.9	2.5%	1.2%	2.9%	7.3%	0.3%
Native American LEP	7	71.4%	+14.3	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	28.6%	0.0%
Native American Non-LEP	187	80.2%	+3.3	3.2%	1.6%	4.8%	9.1%	1.1%
Pacific-Islander LEP	5							
Pacific Islander Non-LEP	77	84.4%	+2.6	3.9%	2.6%	2.6%	6.5%	0.0%
White LEP	441	73.7%	+6.7	3.2%	5.4%	0.9%	16.8%	0.0%
White Non-LEP	51,666	91.2%	+1.9	1.5%	0.7%	2.0%	4.5%	0.0%

Table 8. Graduation Results for Non-Mobile and Mobile Students

High Schools Attended	2011 Cohort #	Graduates		Non-Graduates				
		5-Year Rate	2011 4-Yr Difference	Still in School	Non-Grad Completer	GED	Dropped Out	Expelled
One School	62,452	89.3%	+2.1	1.4%	1.8%	1.6%	5.8%	0.1%
Two Schools	10,091	74.1%	+6.3	2.2%	4.0%	4.9%	14.7%	0.1%
Three Schools	1,466	51.8%	+10.2	5.2%	6.5%	10.4%	25.6%	0.5%
Four or More Schools	298	49.0%	+16.8	8.4%	6.4%	8.4%	27.5%	0.3%

Table 9. Competency Determination (CD) Status for Select Non-Graduate Groups

	Still in School			Dropped Out		
	Number	CD	No CD	Number	CD	No CD
All Students	1,529	31.3%	68.7%	7,228	31.4%	68.6%
Female	549	30.6%	69.4%	2,958	31.2%	68.8%
Male	980	31.6%	68.4%	4,270	31.5%	68.5%
LEP	216	28.2%	71.8%	931	14.7%	85.3%
Low Income	956	36.8%	63.2%	5,924	27.8%	72.2%
Special Education	1,147	19.7%	80.3%	2,418	23.9%	76.1%
High Needs	1,482	30.0%	70.0%	5,951	28.2%	71.8%
African American	285	34.0%	66.0%	1,041	21.3%	78.7%
Asian	58	31.0%	69.0%	219	34.2%	65.8%
Hispanic	414	39.1%	60.9%	2,363	19.8%	80.2%
Multi-race, Non-Hisp.	32	40.6%	59.4%	128	32.0%	68.0%
Native American	4					
Pacific Islander	3					
White	733	25.2%	74.8%	3,441	31.4%	68.6%

Table 10. Distribution of Graduation Rates in the Aggregate for Districts⁸

2011 Five-Year Graduation Rate	Number of Districts	Percentage of Districts
< 50%	3	1.0
50 - <60%	4	1.4
60 - <70%	2	0.7
70 - <80%	29	10.1
80 - <85%	29	10.1
85 - <90%	58	20.1
90 - <95%	79	27.4
95 – 100%	84	29.2
Total	288	100

Table 11. Distribution of Graduation Rates in the Aggregate for Schools⁹

2011 Five-Year Graduation Rate	Number of Schools	Percentage of Schools
< 50%	30	8.1
50 - <60%	9	2.4
60 - <70%	16	4.3
70 - <80%	35	9.5
80 - <85%	39	10.5
85 - <90%	48	13.0
90 - <95%	85	23.0
95 – 100%	108	29.2
Total	370	100

⁸ Includes districts with at least six students in the cohort. District analyses include charter schools, regional school districts and vocational/technical high schools.

⁹ Includes schools with at least six students in the cohort